

1735
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A
DEFENCE
OF THE
PLAIN ACCOUNT
Of the NATURE and END of the
SACRAMENT
OF THE
LORD'S-SUPPER,
AGAINST

The Objections contained in the REMARKS
on that Book.

WITH

Some Observations on the PREFACE to the
Second Edition of those REMARKS.

B E I N G

Two Letters originally published in the
Independent London Journal.

To which is added,

A Tract concerning the *Sacrament* of the
Lord's-Supper, by the *Ever-memorable*
Mr. JOHN HALES of *Eaton.*

L O N D O N:

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PREFACE.

THE pamphlet to which the following papers are a reply, having been dispers'd all over the nation, by a person in great power in the church; and no one having offered an antidote to the poison it is calculated to spread; I have laid these two papers thus together, because as they were published in a *New Journal*, perhaps they might not be so universally known as I could wish; especially in places where *the Remarks* have been sent. I am apprehensive of this only from the *novelty* of the journal, since from the masterly papers that have appear'd in it, there is no doubt but it will be very well re-

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ceived in time ; to which all such designs must be beholden for success.

The inconsistency of the *Remarker* in first raising a clamour against the author of the *Plain Account* in his book, and then telling us, in the preface to the second edition, that he does not know the author's meaning, and consequently whether it is so bad as he suspects, or not, will at first sight appear to my readers: And I shall make no other reflection on it here, than to wish him either a better head, or a better heart !

I have met with some honest well-meaning people, who seem apprehensive that the notions contained in the *Plain Account* are novel ones, because they have not been us'd to such explications of scripture as there occur ; and, tho' they cannot

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not explain their objections, yet hesitate about agreeing with our author. For their sakes I have added (not as any authority, but merely to satisfy such honest people that the writer I am defending is not *singular* in his notions) the sentiments, as far as this subject is concern'd, of a divine of so great eminence in our church, as always to go by, the epithet of the *Ever-memorable* Mr. *John Hales* of *Eaton*.

There is some little notice taken of this piece by a gentleman, who, I dare say, will agree with me, that it may be of service upon this occasion, to exhibit the whole. 'Tis in the *Proper Reply to THE WINCHESTER CONVERTS*.

This last is said to be wrote by a Doctor of Divinity, and the head of a hall in the university of *Oxford*! I believe there is not a single per-

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person that has read it, but is offended at the indecent manner he writes in: And I doubt not but the members of that learned body universally detest the profane and scandalous treatment of so serious a subject.

The following character of Mr. *Hales* will give my readers a better account of him, than any thing any other person can say: And I think Bishop *Pearson**, from whom it is taken, was never suspected of the least design against either christianity, or the establish'd church.

‘ If Mr. *Hales* were unknown
‘ unto thee, be pleased to believe
‘ what I know and affirm to be
‘ true of him; if he were known,
‘ then only be satisfied that what is
‘ published in his name did really
‘ proceed from him: And more
‘ than

* Vide his Preface to Mr. *Hales's Golden Remains*.

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‘ than this needs not to be spoken
‘ in reference to the advancement
‘ of this work; because he which
‘ knew, or believeth what an ex-
‘ cellent person Mr. *Hales* was, and
‘ shall be also perswaded that he
‘ was the author of this book, can-
‘ not chuse but infinitely desire to
‘ see and read him in it.

‘ In order to the first of these,
‘ I shall speak no more than my
‘ own long experience, intimate
‘ acquaintance, and high veneration
‘ grounded upon both, shall
‘ freely and sincerely prompt me
‘ to. Mr. *John Hales*; some time
‘ *Greek* professor of the university
‘ of *Oxford*, long fellow of *Eaton*
‘ *Colledge*, and at last also preben-
‘ dary of *Windsor*, was a man, I
‘ think, of as great a sharpness,
‘ quickness, and subtilty of wit,
‘ as ever this, or perhaps, any na-
‘ tion ever bred. His industry did
‘ strive

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‘ strive, if it were possible to equal
‘ the largeness of his capacity, where-
‘ by he became as great a master
‘ of polite, various, and universal
‘ learning, as ever yet convers’d
‘ with books. Proportionate to his
‘ reading was his meditation, which
‘ furnish’d him with a judgment
‘ beyond the vulgar reach of men,
‘ built upon unordinary notions,
‘ rais’d out of strange observations,
‘ and comprehensive thoughts with-
‘ in himself. So that he really
‘ was a most prodigious example
‘ of an acute and piercing wit, of
‘ a vast and illimited knowledge,
‘ of a severe and profound judg-
‘ ment.

‘ Altho’ this may seem, as in it-
‘ self it truly is, a grand elogium;
‘ yet I cannot esteem him less in
‘ any thing which belongs to a
‘ good man, than in those intel-
‘ lectual perfections: And had he
‘ never

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‘ never understood a letter, he had
‘ other ornaments sufficient to in-
‘ dear him. For he was of a na-
‘ ture (as we ordinarily speak) so
‘ kind, so sweet, so courting all
‘ mankind, of an affability so
‘ prompt, so ready to receive all
‘ conditions of men, that I con-
‘ ceive it near as easy a task for
‘ any one to become so knowing,
‘ as so obliging.

‘ As a christian, none ever
‘ more acquainted with the nature
‘ of the gospel, because none
‘ more studious of the knowledge
‘ of it, or more curious in the
‘ search, which being strengthen-
‘ ed by those great advantages be-
‘ fore mentioned, could not prove
‘ otherwise than highly effectual.
‘ He took indeed to himself a li-
‘ berty of judging, not of others,
‘ but for himself: And if ever any
‘ man might be allowed in these

a.

‘ mat-

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‘ matters to judge, it was he who
‘ had so long, so much, so ad-
‘ vantageously consider’d, and
‘ which is more, never could be
‘ said to have had the least world-
‘ ly designs in his determinations.
‘ He was not only most truly
‘ and strictly just in his secular trans-
‘ actions, most exemplary meek
‘ and humble, notwithstanding his
‘ perfections, but beyond all ex-
‘ ample charitable, giving unto all,
‘ preserving nothing but his books
‘ to continue his learning and
‘ himself: Which when he had
‘ before digested, he was forc’d
‘ at last to feed upon, at the same
‘ time the happiest and most un-
‘ fortunate *Helluo* of books, the
‘ grand example of learning, and
‘ of the envy and contempt which
‘ followeth it.

‘ This testimony may be truly
‘ given of his person, and nothing
‘ in

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‘ in it liable to the least exception,
‘ but this alone, that it comes far
‘ short of him. Which intimation
‘ I conceive more necessary for
‘ such as knew him not, than all
‘ which hath been said.’

I shall only add, that many of the notions of the sacrament which this very great man refutes in this tract, are almost literally the same, with those which the *Remarker*, and people of his size, have attempted now to revive, in opposition to those advanced in the *Plain Account*; and as those errors are industriously propagated, it sufficiently shews that no single part of that book was *entirely needless**.

* Vide *Rem.* p. 4.

E R R A T A.

PAGE 2. l. 7. for *irrecorigibly* read *incorrigibly*. p. 19.
in the margin, for *Rem.* read *Plain Account*. p. 27.
l. 5. for *this* read *the*. p. 41. l. the last, for *be* read *the*
author. p. 42. l. 31. for *be* read *the author*. p. 44. l. 11.
for *them* read *him*.

PAPER the First.

IT must be confess'd we live in an age of great knowledge and discernment; but surely 'tis an unhappiness to be so very quick-sighted as to spy out *heresy* and *infidelity* in every discourse that does not speak the *common* language. A late excellent treatise, entitled, *A plain account of the nature and ends of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, has already felt the resentment of some writers; and, it is generally reported, is to be still farther attack'd by others of no inconsiderable figure. But as those who have hitherto enter'd the lists against it, have both mistaken the meaning of the author, and deviated widely from the subject; I shall make some observations upon them; such as I flatter myself may be of service to the rest, who have not yet presented their productions to the world.

I think but two have appear'd; the *Weekly Miscellany* of July 12, and a pamphlet entitled, *Remarks, &c.* in a letter to the author. I shall take very little notice of the first of these, because the rude-

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2 PAPER *the* FIRST.

ness and ill manners with which it is wrote, so unbecoming the difference between the stations and abilities of the *reputed* authors of that paper, and of the book, render it unworthy of observation. Persons of vulgar life and behaviour have generally such minds, and are incorrigibly conceited and perverse. I shall only therefore make this one remark, that those who endeavour to represent christianity in its *original* plainness and simplicity, usually meet, from writers of this stamp, with such treatment as our *Saviour* and the *primitive* christians did from the harden'd and obstinate *Jews*; insomuch that one can scarce think but they borrow their language from them. The *Pharisees* call'd our *Saviour* THAT DECEIVER^a; and the pious *Orthodoxus* hath courteously apply'd the same word to this worthy follower of him: And no doubt *he* will bear, as he has always borne, such treatment with the temper peculiar to the genuine disciples of the Gospel.

But as the author of the *Remarks* seems to have more modesty and good breeding; tho' his whole introduction had better been spared, and he too is apt sometimes to forget himself; I shall distinctly consider the several objections he has offer'd.

Before

^a *Matt.* xxvii. 63.

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Before I descend to *particulars*, it will be proper to make some *general* observations on the *arts* he has made use of to prejudice his readers, and to draw off their attention from the main subject; which, tho' there is little danger of their influencing men of sense and judgment, yet have often a very ill effect on superficial and zealous readers. To alarm these, could be the only design of telling the author that he had *given up* several articles of christianity^a; — that he has *borrow'd* some of his sentiments from *infidels*^b; — that he had a fair opportunity on such and such occasions of *declaring* himself on *certain principles*, if he would have ventur'd to speak out^c. — But, in the name of good sense, was the author, in a discourse on a *particular* institution of christianity, to write a *whole* system of divinity? or to introduce his opinion on popular disputed points, purely to obviate the prejudices of captious readers? If he had done so, I question whether, in St. *John's* phrase, *the world itself would contain the books* he must have wrote. These things are quite foreign to the subject; and judicious readers like not a book full of digressions. The best writers keep most close to their point; and 'twould have been very unsuitable to the *character* of the *reputed* author to

B 2 ramble

^a *Remarks*, p. 4, 34.

^b *P.* 48, 50.

^c *P.* 32, 36.

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ramble in the manner the *remarker* pre-prescribes. One might therefore as reasonably believe *him* of the same opinion with the author of the *Plain Account* in every particular he has *not* remark'd upon, or which he has not been *as full* in his answer to as every one of his readers might have expected. — For my part, I am astonish'd how men can satisfy their own minds, either in *using* or *approving* such arts as these: And would, for their sakes, be glad if my charity could *reconcile* it with honesty and *christian* simplicity; or, if I could bring myself to believe, that the frequency of it in polemical writings, did not rather *aggravate* than *lessen* the crime: The consequence, *hiding* truth, and putting falsehood in its place, being every day experienc'd. — *Protestants* would call this a very injurious proceeding in a *popish* adversary.

As the author of the *Plain Account* declares he should only consider the SCRIPTURE institution of the sacrament, it is very idle, if not invidious, in the *Remarker*, to quote upon him the different opinions of any *divines*, of whatever character. Before he took this method, he ought to have refuted the following *proposition*; which as he has not *attempted* to do, his unprejudic'd readers will look on it as a *concession* that he could not: ' It is
I
' of

‘ of small importance, therefore, to christi-
 ‘ ans to know what the many writers upon
 ‘ this subject, since the time of the *Evan-*
 ‘ *gelists* and Apostles, have affirm’d. Much
 ‘ less can it be the duty of christians to
 ‘ be guided by what any persons, by their
 ‘ own authority, or from their own ima-
 ‘ ginations, may teach, concerning this
 ‘ duty, *p.* 5.

Sometimes the *Remarker* objects to our
 author, his not *opposing*^a, and at other
 times his not *agreeing*^b with, divines. His
 readers will think this very froward; and
 I am afraid he is ill to please. But neither
 is this any more to the purpose; for the
treatise was wrote, not for the sake of *di-*
vines, but ‘ *sincere* christians, who are found
 ‘ often in danger of great errors or great
 ‘ superstition, and too commonly disturb’d
 ‘ and perplex’d by such fears and terrors,
 ‘ as indeed make their desire of being tru-
 ‘ ly religious the burthen and misery, in-
 ‘ stead of the delight of their lives^c.--Sure
 our author does not reckon the *divines* of
 the *church of England* in this number!

I can scarce think any man, and par-
 ticularly *him*, who declares himself a *cler-*
gyman, so ignorant of the world, as not
 to know that this ordinance (I will not
 say how it comes to pass^d) has been the
 most

^a P. 17. ^b P. 21, 29. ^c *Pref.* to the *Plain Ac.* p. 3.
^d *Vide Plain Ac.* p. 6.

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most *mistaken* and *abused* of any ordinance of christianity. Are there no upright honest people who take great pleasure and delight in *other* duties of religion, but tremble, and are deterr'd from coming to *this*, even when they have most occasion for the comforts and supports of religion? Are there none that *put it off* thro' the whole course of their lives, because they think themselves unworthy, at the same time that perhaps they have the best and most godlike dispositions; and are uneasy in their own minds at the thought of this imagin'd *unworthiness*? — On the other hand, are there none of the most notorious offenders against morality who come to it, expecting *thereby* to receive the pardon of their sins, and from *that* presumption, support themselves in a course of abandon'd wickedness? — Or, is there not a middle sort, who are the less careful of their *future* actions, imagining they receiv'd *grace enough then* for their direction? — And, lastly, is it not too frequent in this *Protestant* country, as well as among the *Roman Catholics*, for all these to recur to it as a *viaticum* in their last moments, to the great grief of serious clergymen, who are usually too tender to disturb them at that time with unseasonable instructions not to depend on it?

The

PAPER *the* FIRST. 7.

The *Remarker* must be very happy in his parishioners, for I would not mistrust his care of their souls, if he has not been led to observe these *various* sorts of people, notwithstanding the labours of all the divines he has quoted: And therefore I am sorry to find him capable of telling us, that ‘ the softest and best thing he ‘ can say of the far greatest part’ of a treatise *professedly* wrote to remove these abuses, ‘ was entirely needless^a’. I cannot persuade myself to be so uncharitable, as to think he wishes them continued. I would rather hope he does not know there are such mistaken, or deceived persons. But as other divines do, and the author tells us *he* had met with many; such a plain account, and by the title he meant it should be a plain one, might be of service to *them*, if not to *divines*. But our author may convince us, as, I believe, will appear from the sequel of this paper, that even some of *them* might want it too: And a man of good nature would be glad, for the sake of *all*, to see these mistakes rectify’d, the cloud on the minds of the ignorant dispersed, and the dubious christian render’d chearful and happy: And this good effect, I can tell him from my own acquaintance, this admirable treatise has had on many, whom he must not pre-
sume

^a *Rem.* p. 4.

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sume to call by any other name than *serious christians*.

In the next place, I cannot but observe, that he has not produced one single passage of *scripture*, either in *answer* to any part of the book, or in *defence* of any thing he himself has advanc'd. And therefore one cannot help shrewdly suspecting a scheme, about a *peculiarity* of the christian religion, that has not one passage from the books of christianity brought to support it. And as great a veneration as I have for the divines he has mention'd, I am sorry to see their authority substituted in the room of *scripture*, in a *Protestant* nation, and by a *clergyman* of the church of *England*.

Lastly, In the common manner of polemical writers, *he* has laid hold of *independent* passages to cavil at, without candour enough to consider them, as they really are, *connected* with the *whole* design of the book: Even the scripture itself, when so treated, has been made to speak the most exceptionable things in the world. And thus we find *him* sometimes condescending to the absurdity of reproaching his adversary, with expressing himself otherwise in *different* places^a; which different manner of *expression*, an ingenuous reader would rather regard as an *explanation*

^a Rem. p. 8, 9.

planation than a *contradiction*. A method of cavilling, which will never bewilder a wise and judicious, however it may embarrass an ignorant or superficial reader; and therefore ought always to be despised by a good writer, who should be above desiring the applause of such readers.

These are the *general* observations I have to make on the manner of this author's writing. As I do not love the common arts of disputing, and particularly would avoid the rudeness I condemn in others, I shall make no harsh or severe remarks upon it. My readers will see how little it serves any good purpose of writing; and particularly how ill-judg'd, to say no worse, to treat in such a manner a writer of so clear discernment, and such exemplary candour and coolness, as the author of this performance I am defending appears to be.—I hope the other gentlemen who are answering it will be more cautious, confining themselves to *scripture* and *reasoning* alone: For since the BANGORIAN controversy, the world is grown too wise to be led, as it is commonly express'd, a *wild-goose-chase*; and are not so easy to be impos'd on by pompous quotations, or metaphysical cavils and subtilties: And the defenders of this book will, no doubt, treat all such methods with the contempt they deserve.

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Having thus consider'd the *manner of writing* the *Remarker* has made use of, and by that means clear'd away almost two thirds of his book; I proceed to examine distinctly, the four objections he has offer'd. (1st.) To the notion of *worthy receiving*; which he supposes destroys the most popular argument made use of against the *test*. (2^{dly}.) To the notion of the *assistance to be expected at this ordinance*. (3^{dly}.) To the denying it to be a *fæderal right*. And, (4^{thly}.) To *not speaking plainer on several subjects*, which the *Remarker* thinks to be *doctrines of christianity*.

These are the things he principally insists on; for tho' he says, at the conclusion, that the notions about *excommunication* and *consecrating the elements* are peculiar, and have given offence, (and what will not give offence to some!) yet as he has nothing in reply to them; but only makes an unbecoming insinuation, that one of them is borrow'd from *the rights of the christian church*; I shall not trouble my reader, at present, with any remarks thereon; especially as I am apt to believe they will be the *principal subjects* of *other* writers, who are said to be engag'd in answer to this book: And I doubt not but, if fame speaks truth as to *some of their names*, we shall have from *one*, a great deal of *plausible ingenuity*; and
from

PAPER *the* FIRST. II

from *another*, a great deal of *common-place learning*, about them.

1st. The *first* objection is to the notion of *worthy receiving*^a, which the author of the *Plain Account* confines to a *serious behaviour*, and an *actual remembrance of Christ* at the time, without any formal preparation peculiarly requisite to this, above the other services of christian religion.

How seasonable and pertinent it was to enlarge on *that* head, will appear to any man that knows the superstitious notions many have of the necessity of previously locking themselves in their closets, to meditate on the death and passion of Christ, &c. as they are advis'd by weak books of devotion: One foundation of the fear and terror I mention'd before! But if the account the author gives of this sacrament from the scripture, be the true account; (and the *Remarker* has not offer'd to shew the contrary;) then, to make such meditation peculiarly necessary to it, is in truth to make the main design, nay, the very essence, of the rite, a preparation for itself.

This our *Remarker* plainly does^b: Nay, he goes so far as to ask, whether 'the
' benefits which' the author himself 'has
' describ'd as resulting from the nature of
' this duty, CAN OTHERWISE arise
' from it, than by the communicant's ex-
C 2 ' exercising

^a Rem. p. 4.

^b P. 20, 21.

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‘ exercising himself in long and serious meditation^a?’ So that this is to be done every time he communicates; and if he has not opportunity for it, he must therefore refrain: Which will vastly lessen the number of communicants, especially in places of hurry and business; And, thro’ this superstition, it is sometimes found that even upon the grand festivals themselves, the minister is forc’d to omit the communion for want of the *canonical* number, small as it is.

Voluntary coming at all, is an acknowledgment of the truth, according to the notion the communicant has of it, of the christian religion. Those who come in remembrance of Christ, must believe there was such a person; and they can scarce think him worthy of such a solemn remembrance, if they do not likewise believe the doctrines he taught; which, as the author of the *Plain Account* has often repeated, virtually implies a resolution to conform to them, and obey him as their Lord and Master.

From whence we may make this inference, that by so *large* a notion of the sacrament, he does not give up any of the doctrines the *Remarker* insinuates he does; for in whatever sense a man remembers Christ, whether as a prophet, a redeemer, or the word,

^a *Rem.* p. 21.

word^a, who *in the beginning was with God, and was God*, he does certainly at that time acknowledge those truths: Nor would it have answered any end to enumerate them, unless to swell the book to an immense size: But, see the force of prejudice! The not making a needless enumeration is constru'd a denial; tho' in fact, the author has made as much *faith* necessary to worthy receiving, as the *divines* he has taken the liberty to differ from.

The *Remarker* is displeas'd, that the profane, and habitual sinner, if he comes seriously, is, by the *Plain Account*, admitted to come to this ordinance. Does he think it wrong to admit, or encourage, them to come? To compel them, surely, then is worse! But let it be observ'd again, that our author's chief design is, to prevent imperfect christians avoiding this institution, at the same time they attend the other ordinances of religion: To which purpose he fully proves, that no more preparation is necessary to this than to them, this being no more sacred than they; which will at once answer the *Remarker's* queries, p. 21. on this head. Our author does not deny preparation to be useful to the performance of this part of religion; but only denies it to be peculiarly necessary to this above the rest.

There-

^a *John* i. 1.

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Therefore, before this *writer* had been so violent in his outcries, he ought to have shewn, that a man cannot be serious in one duty, that is remiss in any other: A doctrine which will introduce infinite confusion into the world. Does it disqualify a man from taking an oath, the most solemn act of religion, in a court of justice, that he is in other respects an immoral man? His testimony is credited, and the most serious and important Affairs of mankind determin'd thereupon; and whoever would attempt to alter it, would be treated as an enthusiast, and a destroyer of the peace and regularity of society.

'Tis astonishing the *Remarker* should be so tedious on this head, without saying one word in defence of the *Corinthians*, who so monstrously abused the design of this ordinance, that they even got drunk at the time of celebrating it; without either shewing, they were guilty of no crime, or else what there was peculiar in their circumstances, that induced St. *Paul* not to reject them, if he design'd the rule immediately added should be a standing one in the christian church, to reject others less wicked. On this passage it is, the author founds his observation, that habitual sinners were not rejected in the apostolick times from *this* ordinance, any more than from any other ordinance of religion.—

But, as I said before, scripture is not the thing the *Remarker* deals in; nor are his notions to be prov'd from thence.

Should any farther doubt remain on this head, let the reader consider that *Judas* the traitor was allow'd to be present at the celebration of this ordinance even by our Saviour himself, after he had actually agreed with the *Pharisees* to betray his master. An action, for which alone, *it had been good for him if he had not been born*^a! This no one who reads the Evangelists with care can doubt of. And therefore as long as the writer of *the Plain Account* has the authority both of *the author* of the institution, and of *St. Paul*, for what he says, we shall freely yield the *Remarker* whatever advantage he can get from the names he mentions in opposition to them.

At the conclusion of this head, he has interested the *Dissenters* against the author, by telling them, that if his account be true, 'the most popular argument they make use of for the repeal of the test, is wrested from them. 'Tis no *prostitution*, no profanation, to admit the vilest of mankind to come to it^b.' To admit such as have been great finners, who now come with seriousness to this institution, can be no prostitution, or profanation of it:

^a *Mat.* xxvi. 24.

^b *Rem.* P. 19.

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it: And besides there is a great difference between *admitting* those who themselves come voluntarily to it as a duty, and COMPELLING others, who have no sense of the duty, who perhaps look upon it as a mere farce, and treat it accordingly. — Many instances of such persons might be produced: And if he has nothing stronger to plead in favour of the test, I am afraid the advocates for it will owe him much less thanks than the *Dissenters* will.

2dly, He objects to the notion of the *assistance to be expected at this ordinance*^a. And in answer to it, I shall give the author of the *Plain Account*'s own words; which so strongly shew the tendency of this institution to advance our *growth in grace*, that I believe my readers will join with me in wondering how any man could read so carelessly. 'Can any one 'judge,' says the *Remarker* speaking of the assistance of the Spirit, 'whether you 'are of opinion, that it belongs to christians of the present age, or not? Did 'it not become you to have explain'd 'how far you thought it did belong to 'them, and what expectation a christian 'may now reasonably form^b?' — The words of the author are as pertinent a reply, as if this question had been propos'd to him before he wrote the book:

' By

^a *Rem.* p. 24.

^b *Ibid.*

‘ By our partaking of the Lord’s supper,
 ‘ according to the nature and design of it,
 ‘ we profess ourselves Christ’s disciples,
 ‘ and acknowledge our obligation to live
 ‘ according to his laws: By this we are
 ‘ led to a serious consideration of the tenor
 ‘ and design of his holy religion, and to
 ‘ the sincerest thankfulness for all that he
 ‘ did and suffer’d for us, as well as to the
 ‘ most proper dispositions and resolutions
 ‘ of behaving ourselves as becomes us, in
 ‘ relation to him as our head, and to our
 ‘ brethren as fellow-members with us of
 ‘ the same body. This is therefore an ef-
 ‘ fectual acknowledgment of our strict
 ‘ obligation to all instances of piety and
 ‘ virtue. And thus, by its own tendency,
 ‘ it leads our thoughts, and consequently
 ‘ our practice, to all that is good, and to
 ‘ all that is necessary for us to ask of
 ‘ God, or to act ourselves, towards our
 ‘ advancement in it: So that our atten-
 ‘ dance upon this rite is not only the pay-
 ‘ ing a religious service to Christ, which
 ‘ cannot but be always favourably accept-
 ‘ ed of God; but it is a doing that, which
 ‘ we ourselves can see to tend naturally to
 ‘ revive and keep alive in our minds all
 ‘ such thoughts, dispositions and tenden-
 ‘ cies, as are proper to work upon the
 ‘ conduct of our whole lives.

‘ And what reasonable creature would
 ‘ not be content with benefits of this sort,
 ‘ which are always of substantial and last-
 ‘ ing service, without fancying to himself
 ‘ privileges, communications, or impressi-
 ‘ ons from above, of another sort; never
 ‘ expressly promis’d to this duty; never,
 ‘ with certainty, to be judged of in any
 ‘ case; often fallacious, and always leav-
 ‘ ing the mind, in which the images of
 ‘ them have been work’d up, in a state
 ‘ satisfied with what carries no rational
 ‘ satisfaction in it; and too often in a dis-
 ‘ position of thinking meanly of those
 ‘ real and practical excellencies, which
 ‘ are the true heights, and exalted accom-
 ‘ plishments of the christian life? In this
 ‘ way the Lord’s supper is one of the
 ‘ means of grace, in every good sense of
 ‘ that phrase: As the due partaking of it
 ‘ tends to procure us the present favour of
 ‘ God; as it is the mean which naturally
 ‘ leads to such dispositions, and christian
 ‘ graces, as entitle us finally to his favour
 ‘ in heaven; and which, among other
 ‘ means, helps to render us fit for all such
 ‘ assistances as are proper for him to give
 ‘ to free and reasonable creatures^a.’

This passage I have transcribed at full
 length, for two reasons; (1st.) Because
 nothing more strong and masterly can be
 wrote,

^a *Plain Account*, p. 156.

wrote, to shew the excellent use of this rite of the christian religion, in opposition to those who reject all *positive* institutions, imagining them to destroy morality, and encourage superstition, rather than to advance the one, and root out the other: Whereas, according to this account, 'They will help us, if we be not wanting to ourselves, in our voluntary and sincere endeavours of reforming all our vices, and encreasing in all virtue, which is our likeness to God himself^a.' A design, which they who so much exalt and magnify morality, should rejoice to see promoted; and which does, in the most effectual manner, remove all superstitious abuse of this institution. And, (*2dly.*) Because it has so good a tendency to moderate the sentiments of others, who imagine all religion to consist in positive institutions. By this account they tend to raise us, indeed, to a likeness of God, which is the perfection of religion: They qualify us for his favour, both in this life, and the other; and so far are of real use, as excellent means to the most valuable end: But they are of no value in themselves, only as they tend to promote this end.

And since the *Remarker* has so excellent a talent at raising doubts, and multiplying questions; I would ask him,

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^a *Rem.* p. 157.

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in my turn, what end he can propose more worthy the pursuit of christians at this sacrament, than the final favour of God? Whether this does not imply all the helps and advantages we can enjoy? And whether he does not believe, in his conscience (for I cannot think him so slow of understanding as he would represent himself) that the author by this expression — ‘ renders us fit for *all* such assistances ‘ as are proper for Him [God] to give to ‘ free and reasonable creatures,’ design’d to include all the assistance promis’d in the gospel? — I will only say on this occasion, to read with such suspicion, and throw such constructions on so well-meaning an author, can never be balanc’d by all the reputation, or advancement, ’tis possible for him to get by his book.

Let me ask him farther, If there be any superior design of this institution mention’d in the New Testament, or any assistance promis’d IN EXPRESS TERMS, to those who come to it, that is not promis’d to them who come to the other institutions of christianity, (for that is the author’s argument) why the *Remarker* did not produce it? Or if there is none; (and there may be none, for any thing he has said to the contrary) upon what principle could he endeavour to palm Dr. *Clarke*^a upon his

^a *Rem.* p. 25.

his readers, for a writer inspir'd, as it were, to supply that defect.

3dly, His *third* objection is, to the denying it to be a *fæderal rite*; contrary, in his usual stile, to the opinion of many celebrated divines. But notwithstanding what they may have taught of it, let us examine the reasons our author gives for his assertion. He says, It is not a renewal of the covenant, because every transgression does not break it; amendment and reformation, when we have done amiss, being one condition of it; and what is not broken needs not to be renewed^a. That it is not the seal of the covenant on God's part, because it was sealed once for all, by the blood of Christ^b. From whence he infers, consistently with his whole scheme, that it is not itself a covenant, but the MEMORIAL^c of the covenant between God and man. And this he likewise shews, by parity of reason, from the *Paschal Supper*; 'which was, 'to put the *Israelites* in remembrance of 'the redemption, or deliverance of *Israel* 'out of *Egypt*^d.' Now I would ask the *Remarker*, what good ends he can propose, by representing it as a *renewal*, or, as he calls it, a *repeating* the covenant; which our author does not propose, by calling it a *memorial* of the covenant? If it should
prove,

^a *Plain Account*, p. 165. ^b P. 167. ^c P. 168. ^d P. 171.

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prove, as he says, only a difference about a word; yet there is a much greater accuracy and consistency of style in our author's manner of expression, supposing them equally true.

But the *Remarker* himself does, in truth, give it up in the conclusion^a, where he says, 'I must own, were it not for the
' seriousness of the subject, I should smile
' to see you so laboriously arguing, for
' three or four pages together, that the
' Lord's supper cannot be called the *seal*
' of the covenant, because Christ's blood
' is the seal; as tho' the word *seal* might
' not be metaphorically applied to more
' things than one, when each bears the
' requisite similitude.' But is the *author* speaking of what it may metaphorically be called, or what it really is? I dare say this *clergyman* would take it very ill of a *Jesuit*, for I presume a protestant divine does not hold transubstantiation, who should expect him to acknowledge the bread in the sacrament to be our Saviour's *real* body, because it is call'd his *body*; and yet it would be just as much to the purpose, as this passage is to make out, that this ordinance is a seal of the covenant, because it may be *metaphorically called* a seal. — If it should prove to be a *fæderal rite* at last, the *Remarker* has
not

^a *Rem.* p. 32.

not had the good fortune to shew it; and therefore, till he can convince us that a *metaphor* is the thing *itself*, he had much better not have put his readers in mind of smiling.

4^{thly}, I come now to the last, the capital objection of all; for the sake of drawing some inferences from which, the whole pamphlet seems to be wrote: How *fairly* they are drawn, the reader will judge; whether at all invidiously, I leave to his own conscience. The objection is to the author's *not having spoken plainer on several subjects* which the *Remarker* thinks to be *doctrines of christianity*. 'I proceed next, Sir', says he, 'to lay before you the reasons which prevail with me to think you have given up several principal articles of our faith. I don't say you have fully open'd your mind; but if I understand you aright, you insinuate the following opinions^a, &c.'

In the beginning of this paper I took notice of the suspicious nature of the *Remarker*: And I believe it will here appear to my readers, even from his own pen, that the negative he has put upon the author's christianity arises from mere suspicion. — 'I don't say you have fully open'd your mind; but if I understand you aright.' — If he has not FULLY opened

^a Rem. p. 34.

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opened his mind, 'charity which hopeth
'all things, and *believeth* all things^a,'
would have determin'd a genuine christian
writer to judge no worse about a
man's opinions, than from his own words.
But we live in times distant from the Apostles;
and that good spirit is by many thought
rather a character of the disciples of the false,
than the true, Christ. I hope the *Remarker*
has not learnt the contrary one from his
favourite divines! from those he has quoted
I am sure he cannot.

As he has been so just, however, as to
put this affair *on his understanding the author
aright*, I believe I might venture, from
what has been already said, to leave the
issue on the credit my readers will give
his understanding. But I will just enquire
into the reasons of his suspicion. (*1st.*) He
thinks our author has given up the corruption
of our nature by *Adam's* fall, 'because
he has never mention'd it in his
'forms of prayer, and consequently never
'petition'd for the assistance of the divine
'Spirit against it^b.'

Were it not for the sake of the publick,
who are too often amus'd by such surmises,
and led from the principal subjects to abuse
the persons they are thus taught to suspect,
(the most antichristian temper of any,
and which this book is too well cal-

^a 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

^b *Rem.* p. 34.

calculated to inspire the ignorant with;) I would gladly spare *the Remarker* the mortification he must receive from the proper reply to this part of his performance. But tenderness to him would, in this case, be cruelty to my readers. And therefore he must excuse me saying, it is a shame for any private christian, but contemptible for a clergyman, a teacher of the people, either to be ignorant, or to forget, that there is not one word of this same corruption of our nature, commonly call'd original sin, insinuated in the prayer our *Saviour*, who best knew the proper subjects of prayer, taught his disciples. There is no forgiveness ask'd of it, nor assistance petition'd against it. He thought such general expressions, as are blam'd in our author, the most proper; *forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*— How different from the temper, required in this condition, is that, which bringeth *an accusation against the brethren!*

How other divines may help him off this scandalous ignorance, I know not: But this I am sure, that from unassisted reason, one cannot help censuring him for such bold impiety and presumption; for impious and presumptuous it is thus to insinuate, that our Saviour himself has given up an article of our faith; and the

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insinuation will hold as strongly against the one as against the other: Nor can he blame any man that should retort his own argument upon himself, and urge, that tho' ' he has not fully opened his ' mind, yet, if he understands him aright, ' he has INSINUATED' this objection to the inspired prayer itself: And so, could we condescend to fight him with his own weapons, this grave, orthodox, suspicious divine might at last be fairly beat into a fly, subtle, undermining infidel.

Notwithstanding this *faux pas*, I am willing to believe his design was no worse than to raise a prejudice against our author; and when that is serv'd, he will be ready to allow our Lord's prayer to be a tolerable one.

But there is another misfortune attends *the Remarker*, which, perhaps, some of his high-flying brethren may hold to be worse than the former; and that is, the objection glances from our author directly upon the *daily service of the church*, in which there is not to be found one syllable of this *original taint* or *natural byass* to evil^a. The *confession* recites only our omissions, and our actual sins; the *petitions* for grace, are against temptations, and the evil habits we ourselves have contracted; and the assistance of the *divine spirit*^b as sparingly re-

^a Rem. p. 34.

^b Ibid. p. 35.

requested, as in the prayers of our author; which the *Remarker* himself acknowledges to be thrice^a; enough certainly to satisfy any reasonable man as to that particular, were there no other passage in this whole book to the same purpose: But there is one so expressive, that a candid reader would not overlook; and makes it appear as if *the Remarker* read it with a design to find fault, and a resolution to write against it, at all events. 'Tis p. 159, 160.

' To say, this sacrament is ordain'd peculiarly for obtaining of God's Holy Spirit, is, I think, to forget and contradict those express words of our Saviour, in which he himself has annexed that benefit (whatever the nature and degree of it be, according to the different ages of the church, and the various necessities of christians) TO THE DUTY OF PRAYER.' A passage too plain to need any comment upon.

However there must be some fault; and this author shews his good-will towards finding it, as follows, ' Add to these petitions your own qualifying clauses, and what do they dwindle to? Guide and govern me by thy Holy Spirit, whatever the nature and degree of this benefit be, in the present age of the church, and my necessity at this time. This, I ima-

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^a *Rem.* p. 37.

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‘ gine, being esteemed an enlighten’d and
 ‘ pure age, the necessity of his direction
 ‘ and assistance now, must of course be
 ‘ small ^a.’—Here I can scarce suppress my
 indignation. Is it possible for a man, in
 a habit the people are taught to reverence,
 who, in the beginning^b of his book, com-
 plains of the decay of piety, to set an ex-
 ample so destructive of truth, of charity,
 of every thing that is praise-worthy!
 To call the most modest, submissive, com-
 prehensive expression possible to be wrote,
 a qualifying clause that dwindles into no-
 thing! How good soever it is to be *zea-
 lously affected in a good thing*; this is so
 very much averse from the spirit of christi-
 anity, that ’twould be a criminal nicety not
 to take notice of, and expose it. I must
 tell this author, that however contempti-
 bly he may think of the age, I hope it is,
 and will continue to be, too *enlighten’d* to
 allow such zeal as this to pass for reasoning.

By this ill-digested objection the *Remarker*
 would, in the next place, persuade the po-
 pulace to believe the author is against in-
 fant-baptism. ‘ You have favour’d us with
 ‘ a comment on the office of our church
 ‘ for the administration of the holy sup-
 ‘ per; had you done the same with re-
 ‘ gard to that for infant-baptism, we needed
 ‘ not to have been at so much difficulty
 ‘ to

^a *Rem.* p. 39.

^b *Ibid.* p. 4.

^c *Ibid.* p. 51.

‘ to learn your meaning concerning the
 ‘ operations of the Holy Spirit. But, &c.^a’
 To this acute observation it is sufficient to
 reply, that *baptism* had nothing to do with
 his subject. And our author well under-
 stood, and was content to mind, his busi-
 ness; whatever may be said of the *Re-*
marker —. He might, as much to the
 purpose, have desired him to write a com-
 ment on *St. Matthew*, for the benefit of
 the ladies ^b!

The last part of the objection (and then
 I think I have labour’d thro’ the whole,
 for I took notice of what he says of ex-
communication, &c. in the beginning) is,
 that the author of the *Plain Account*, &c.
 has given up *the satisfaction* made for sin
 by the death of Christ. And this he thinks
 the author has done, because he has only
 consider’d his death as a confirmation of
 the truth of his doctrine. But if this doc-
 trine of *satisfaction* be an essential doctrine
 of christianity; then, as I have already
 had occasion to take notice from what
 the author has said, the remembrance of
 Christ, being a virtual acknowledgment of
 the truth of his whole religion, is an ac-
 knowledgment of that among the other
 articles of it. And it was much more
 concise, and full as much to the purpose,

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^a Rem. p. 41.^b See a Defence of the Gospel of St. Mat-
 thew, in a Letter TO A LADY.

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to acknowledge these things in general, as to attempt to enumerate particulars: Nay, 'tis much to be preferr'd; for if mentioning the doctrines of Christ in general only could give offence to any, it would be next to an impossibility to treat of them particularly in such a manner, however cautious it was, as should not raise the zeal of some or other party against him: Whereas he was writing for the use of all christians, without regard to parties; and then the most general expressions were most likely to include them all; especially if he was of opinion, and a great deal is to be said for it, that many of their disputes are more about words than things. And if our *Remarker* had dealt more in generals; and not descended to particularize the *original taint*, he might have sav'd his credit, and been thought to have had a reverence for the Lord's Prayer, and the service of the church.

There is one popular objection under this article that deserves some notice, and that is, that the considering the death of Christ only as a testimony to the truth of his doctrine, is attributing no more to it than to that of St. *Stephen*, and other martyrs, 'For they shed their blood in testimony to the truth of the gospel'. 'Tis true, they did so; but, were they free
from

^a *Rem.* p. 44.

from all *sin* as Christ was? Or did they teach the gospel as their own doctrine? Did they choose disciples, and give them a power of working miracles in confirmation of it? Did they send the Holy Ghost *to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment*^a? Or did they rise again from the dead, thereby to ascertain the hope of christians? Or had they followers, who called themselves by their names, and baptized others into them? Or, lastly, was any rite appointed to be observed, as a memorial of their death — ? Sure the *Remarker* never considers the difficulties of his assertions, nor takes any care to obviate them; and his parallels are just as exactly drawn as those of a *famous brother*, that *met in the center*.

Thus, have I defended the *Plain Account*, against this writer's objections; and doubt not but it will stand the test against all others. But, as I find by conversation, that many other parts of it are misunderstood, it may not be amiss, before I conclude this paper, to caution such readers of this excellent book, as have been accustomed to a different stile, to consider it as wrote with the most serious and good-natur'd view, to remove the doubts and uneasinesses of those, who, by some means

^a *John* xvi. 8.

means or other, have been led to entertain too awful and perplexing notions of this ordinance. 'Tis to answer this purpose the author has laid aside all those indefinite expressions, either not to be found in the scripture, or not easily to be understood without a particular explanation; and, perhaps at last, of so doubtful a signification, that they change their meaning, as other phrases do, almost in every age; and may at one time have a very superstitious and mischievous signification; at another be very harmless, perhaps just and good. For example; the word *grace*, originally meant nothing but *favour*, but has by many been used in the most enthusiastical sense, for an efficacious communication of good thoughts, and a compulsive influence upon our wills, which, I think, was never promis'd, nor is it reasonable to expect. The same may be said of many other expressions, which however innocently used at first, yet a prudent man would lay aside, as soon as ever they came to mislead the upright and sincere.

I shall only add, that nothing ought to be expected there but what is closely connected with the subject. The *reputed* author is, as I have said before, one of

the exactest reasoners of this, or any other age. He needs no help, nor ought any man to dictate either sentiment, or stile to him. And 'tis as impertinent to quote other writers upon him, as it would be to object the sentiments, or stile, of any one of the *classicks* to the rest, when they are all of them originals in their kind.

PAPER the Second.

THE *Remarker* on the *Plain Account of the Sacrament* having had the courage to publish a second edition of his pamphlet, with a preface ‘farther explaining his view in writing it,’ without having done himself the justice to reply either to the answer to the objections he had started, or to those made against some sentiments of his own, in my former paper, published some time before that preface came out, I shall make some observations on that preface, which is of so extraordinary a nature, that I think it ought not to pass without notice.

He begins with complaining that ‘the design of his book has not been so perfectly understood, as he could wish.’ For my part, I must declare, that his preface, as far as it relates to his own performance, has given me no new light into it: And I believe this will be clear enough to any who will give himself the trouble to look into my former paper, and take notice of the method in which I have rang’d my observations on him: And I flatter myself the answers there given,

not from my own imagination, but from the author's express words, or his manner of reasoning, will appear satisfactory to the open, unprejudic'd part of his readers.

' His intention,' he says, ' was a call ' on the author, to tell us his meaning' as to several particulars; too clear and plain, in the opinion of some of the wisest and most sensible people, to need any farther explanation: But sure he can have no reason to expect to be gratified in his request, who has not condescended to take notice of what has been already said to his objections, or to clear up those that have been made to several offensive parts of his own book. Neither ought he to think to excuse it by the last paragraph of his preface, ' should any one pretend to ' ascertain this author's meaning but himself, there may be an eternal disputing, ' whether it is his meaning or not, without ever entering into the merits of the ' cause;' for there cannot be a more direct, and effectual, answer to himself. He has, in many places, ' pretended to ascertain ' his meaning' very differently, to speak no harsher, from the plain and obvious construction of his words. He has endeavour'd to multiply disputes, ' without ever ' entering into the merits of the cause;' and why then should he expect the author should compliment him with a large

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confession of his faith about *original sin*^a, *infant baptism*^b, *the satisfaction of Christ*^c, &c. or with adopting any of his supposititious meanings; on all which there may be 'an eternal disputing' foreign to the purpose of the book?

For this reason I shall pass over the *six* first pages of the preface, as already confuted, or of no relation to the subject, and proceed to the *seventh*, where he offers to shew why no farther reply ought to be given to the *Plain Account*. And as it is no secret WHERE his piece has been patroniz'd, nor by what methods it has been dispers'd abroad, there is great reason to believe this is authority enough to presume we shall have no other —. 'Many
' persons, I perceive, expect a more elaborate performance in answer to this *Plain
' Account of the Sacrament*, but from what
' has been already said, I think it must
' sufficiently appear that such an answer is,
' as yet, needless, or at least IMPRACTICABLE; for, till the author shall be
' pleased to ascertain his meaning, to what
' purpose is it to multiply arguments?
' Should any one of these meanings, which
' appear exceptionable, be fix'd upon, and
' laboriously confuted, and he should afterwards deny it to be his, he may JUSTLY
' tell

^a Vide Rem. p. 65.

^b Ibid. p. 42.

^c Ibid. p. 44.

‘ tell us that we have dress’d up a *puppet*
 ‘ of our own, and then *fought* against it.’

As this concession absolutely gives up the whole controversy, by acknowledging they are not sure whether they have any REAL objection to the book or no, I shall enquire what possible reasons there can be for dropping it so easily and suddenly. This is the more astonishing, because great jealousy was raised against it from the first of its being expected; and I remember, two years ago, even so long before it came out, and before any one could possibly know what it would contain, it was said by some warm divines in publick company, that it **SHOULD** *be answered*. The only thing therefore to be supposed is, that after all the lights these gentlemen could take it in, (and ’tis now a good while they have had to consider it) they find it so connected, so compleatly, and yet so simply, and unaffectedly dress’d, that they know not how to expose it, without incurring the charge of the *puppet*. However, the *Remarker*, tho’ sensible of this, has been hardy enough to attempt it; and as his performance has been applauded and encouraged by some, it looks as if they had so good an opinion of their own management, as to think they can play off any thing to advantage.

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He has been so just as to allow, that whoever misrepresents the meaning of the book, the author might JUSTLY tell him he had dressed up a *puppet* of his own. As therefore the danger was so very great, they, who at first threaten'd it should be answer'd, have acted much the wiser part, to decline exposing themselves, by so unmanly an employment.

But tho' their *prudence* is to be commended, what can they say to the *honesty* of so tamely giving up a book they every where rail at, and represent as full of heresy, or in the phrase of a great and powerful P——te EXOTICK *from one end to the other!* This is a matter of difficulty, and worthy the farther trouble of the *Remarker*. For, tho' in his preface he has thrown it entirely on their ignorance of the sense of the author, I believe the world has too good an opinion of their sagacity, to be put off by so slender a pretence.

And yet, as perhaps there may be no better offered, I shall employ the rest of my paper in a serious address to my readers, about the treatment the author of the *Plain Account*, and his book, have met with among some; tho' others, to whom it has been of infinite use, are not wanting in their gratitude.

I have already said, the book was threaten'd with an answer some years before it appear'd. When it did appear, some of the greatest names were talk'd of as preparing to combat with it; and the pamphlet we have been considering march'd out, as soon almost as it could possibly be got ready. I believe no impartial person has read it, but thinks it strain'd and hasty; and in the preface to the second edition, the writer himself complains of the opinions of the world about it. And yet even THIS pamphlet has been patroniz'd, and propagated all over the nation, by a *certain* friend to *church power* and *wholesome discipline*! The view of it we have already seen, and in the preface 'tis avow'd, to be nothing else but to insinuate to the populace, that our author is a man of bad notions, and exceptionable meaning, tho' the *Remarker* owns he cannot directly say at present what they are, and from thence infers 'tis *impracticable* to write against them, till the author shall furnish out materials for an *inquisition*.

As these *Remarks* have done very little against the book, out comes a second edition, earnestly entreating the author, to furnish them with something particular to say against it. When men have a disposition to cavil and censure, there is no wonder at their greediness to find out matter
for

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for it: And that part of the preface I am not at all surpriz'd at. But is it not astonishing, that when we were encourag'd to expect some considerable answers, and by the names that were mentioned no body could doubt but they would be considerable, we should be told at last that as the book now stands, it is IMPRACTICABLE to write one? That all our expectations should be balk'd, and none of the dignified or aspiring part of the clergy can be found to stand in the gap, and prevent the mischief of this book, which tho' they cannot *prove*, many of them are forward enough to *declare*, is a bad one!

See here the spirit of *superstition*, and at the same time the force of *truth*! The author of the *Plain Account*, &c. lays aside all the technical terms of scholastical divinity, which have obscured almost all subjects, and had a mischievous effect on weak, tho' honest minds; he fetches his *account* from scripture alone, disclaiming all other authority; and reasons on those passages of scripture in the most plain and obvious manner, thereby freeing his readers from all causeless fear about coming to this ordinance, which they never feel at coming to any other; calming and comforting the honest, frighten'd trembling mind. Instantly *superstition*, which makes its market of these *spectres and chimæras*
dire

PAPER *the* SECOND. 41

dire of mankind, exclaims against him! But, when requir'd to give a reason of the clamour, declares it to be IMPRACTICABLE, unless the author will avow a bad meaning, which the most jealous sagacity only apprehends that there seems to be ground to suspect, but cannot fix!

Should therefore no other answer come out, as this preface gives us to understand there will not; and for reasons already mentioned, 'tis to be presum'd the author of it has authority for what he says; it is impossible for any one not to conclude, that even the enemies of the *Plain Account* allow the truth of all there said, which they have not objected to; and that those who think their objections are only *puppets* of their own inventions, they give up them too.

It will therefore remain undisputed, that
 ' No opinions or customs of *uninspired*
 ' men are of great importance to christi-
 ' ans, in forming their notions either of the
 ' nature of this sacrament; or of their qua-
 ' lifications for it—.' That ' the scripture
 ' *alone* is the guide in this case ---.' That
 ' there it is confin'd to a religious eating
 ' bread, and drinking wine, in remem-
 ' brance of Christ ---.' That ' the interpre-
 ' tation of the passages of scripture relating
 ' to the institution in the *Plain Account*,
 ' stands firm; and that those which he has

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' rejected as of no relation to it, are given
 ' up.' — That ' our Saviour's *blessing*,
 ' mentioned in the form of institution,
 ' was not blessing or consecrating the ele-
 ' ments, but blessing or giving thanks to
 ' God.' — That ' the bread and wine in
 ' the sacrament, are not sacrific'd to God
 ' upon an *altar*, and that there is no such
 ' thing as an altar under the christian dis-
 ' pensation.' — That ' whoever seriously
 ' remembers Christ *at the time* of cele-
 ' bration, thereby acknowledging him-
 ' self his disciple, communicates *wor-*
 ' *thily*, and has no reason to be affrighted
 ' at St. *Paul's* denunciation against *unwor-*
 ' *thy* receivers.' — That ' the whole of
 ' this account is consistent with the *com-*
 ' *munion-office* of the church of *Eng-*
 ' *land*.' — That ' 'tis unjust to reject any
 ' from communion, on other pretences,
 ' who behave themselves at it suitably
 ' to the design of the institution. —
 ' That ' tho' this ordinance has an ad-
 ' mirable tendency to promote the prac-
 ' tice of virtue, and all the duties of
 ' the christian life; 'tis deceiving ourselves
 ' to expect any *extraordinary* communica-
 ' tions at it, not promised to it more than
 ' to the other institutions of christianity.'
 — And therefore, that ' all the accounts,
 ' which he enumerates, and rejects, in the
 ' conclusion, are *false* accounts, only tend-
 ' ing to mislead.'

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The truth of all this, I say, is tacitly acknowledg'd by those who give up the book as IMPRACTICABLE to answer; or at least they acknowledge they are innocent and harmless positions; otherwise they cannot, consistently with honesty and love of truth, suffer mankind to be deceived by them.—And yet their clamour seems not in the least to subside.

What then can we think of the conduct of these men! Zeal for what they imagine to be truth is commendable; and even tho' they were mistaken in their notions, ought so to be acknowledg'd by all the friends of it. But can truth be propagated at the expence of candor and charity! Can its cause be maintained, by insulting the reputation of men of probity and honour! and exposing the fastest friends to christian liberty, and the simplicity of the gospel, as men of novel conceits; representing them as attempting to subvert the very religion they teach! This is to make it inconsistent with itself. And yet these are the methods the *Remarker* has taken; these are the subterfuges men in his scheme generally fly to: They that cannot argue, can rail; and they that cannot confute, can misrepresent.

I may venture to leave it to the natural sense, and native honesty of mankind,

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what to judge of a cause that needs such supports, or of men capable of embracing it. Should they alter their conduct, and fairly and openly attack the *Plain Account*, those in the sentiments of it are under no apprehension for the goodness of its principles; nor so much attach'd to it, as not to give it up, if it deserves the clamour rais'd against it. They are free to encourage every man to examine it to the bottom. Let them examine it with the most jealous eye, provided it be with the brave jealousy of a friend to liberty, which is equally ready to acquit or condemn; but the distemper'd jealousy of a slave is, as 'tis generally represented, a very jaundice; difficult to be cured; and yet till 'tis cured, incapable of perceiving any thing but in its own colour.

*A Tract on the SACRAMENT
of the LORD'S SUPPER.
By Mr. Hales of Eaton.*

Kind Sir,

IN perusal of your letters, together with the schedule inclos'd, no circumstance did so much move me, as this, That so ordinary points as are discuss'd there, and that in a bare and ordinary manner, should amuse either yourself or any man else, that pretends to ordinary knowledge in controversies in christian religion. For the points therein discuss'd are no other than the subject of every common pamphlet, and sufficiently known (that I may so say) in every barber's shop. Yet because you require my opinion of matters there in question, I willingly afford it you; tho' I fear I shall more amuse you with telling you the truth, than the disputants there did, by abusing you with error. For the plain and necessary (tho' perhaps unwelcome) truth is, that in the greater part of the dispute, both parties

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much mistook themselves, and that fell out which is in the common proverb, *sc. Whilst the one milks the ram, the other holds under the sieve.* That you may see this truth with your eyes, I divide your whole dispute into two heads; the one concerning the *Eucharist*, the other concerning the *Church's mistaking itself about fundamentals.*

For the *first*, It consisteth of two parts; of a proposition, and of a reply. The proposition expresses (at least he that made it, intended it so to do, tho' he mistakes) the doctrine of the reformed churches, concerning the presence of Christ in the *Eucharist*. The reply doth the like for the church of *Rome*, in the same argument. Now that you may see how indifferently I walk, I will open the mistakes of both parties, that so the truth of the thing itself (being unclouded of errors) may the more clearly shine forth.

The first mistake common to both is, that they ground themselves much upon the words of consecration, as they are called; and suppose, that upon the pronouncing of those words, something befalls that action, which otherways would not; and that without those words the action were lame. Sir, I must confess my ignorance unto you. I find no ground for the necessity of this doing. Our Saviour instituting

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tuting that holy ceremony, commands us to do what he did, leaves us no precept of saying any words; neither will it be made appear, that either the blessed apostles or primitive christians had any such custom: Nay, the contrary will be made probably to appear, out of some of the antientest writings of the church's ceremonials. Our Saviour indeed used the words, but it was to express what his meaning was: Had he barely acted the thing, without expressing himself by some such form of words, we could never have known what it was he did. But what necessity is there now of so doing? for when the congregation is met together, to the breaking of bread and prayer, and see bread and wine upon the communion-table, is there any man can doubt the meaning of it, altho' the canon be not read? It was the farther solemnizing, and beautifying that holy action, which brought the canon in; and not an opinion of adding any thing to the substance of the action. For that the words were used by our Saviour to work any thing upon the bread and wine, can never out of scripture or reason be deduced; and beyond these two, I have no ground for my religion, neither in substance nor in ceremony. The main foundation that upholds the necessity of this form

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form of action now in use, is church-custom and church-error.

Now for that topick-place of church-custom, it is generally too much abused: For whereas naturally the necessity of the thing ought to give warrant to the practice of the church, I know not by what device matters are turn'd about, and the customary practice of the church is alledg'd to prove the necessity of the thing; as if things had received their original from the church-authority, and not, as the truth is, from an higher hand. As for the church's error, on which I told you this form of action is founded, it consists in the uncautelous taking up an unsound ungrounded conclusion of the fathers for a religious maxim. *St. Ambrose*, I trow, was he that said it, and posterity hath too generally applauded it; *Accedat verbum ad elementum, & fiat sacramentum*. By which they would persuade us, against all experience, that to make up a sacrament, there must be something said, and something done; whereas indeed, to the perfection of a sacrament, or holy mystery (for both these are one) it is sufficient that one thing be done whereby another is signified, tho' nothing be said at all. When *Tarquinius* was walking in his garden, a messenger came and ask'd him, what he would have done unto the town
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of *Gabii*, then newly taken? He answered nothing, but with his wand struck off the tops of the highest poppies: And the messenger understanding his meaning, cut off the heads of the chief of the city. Had this been done *in sacris*, it had been forthwith truly a sacrament, or holy mystery: *Cum in omnibus scientiis voces significant res, hoc habet proprium theologia, quod ipse res significatæ per voces, etiam significant aliquid*, saith *Aquinas*: And upon the second signification are all spiritual and mystical senses founded. So that *in sacris*, a mystery or sacrament is then acted, when one thing is done, and another is signified; as it is in the holy communion, tho' nothing be said at all. The antient sacrifices of the *Jews*, whether weekly, monthly, or yearly, their passover, their sitting in booths, &c. these were all sacraments: Yet we find not any sacred forms of words used by the priests or people in the execution of them.

To sum up that which we have to say in this point: The calling upon the words of consecration in the *Eucharist*, is too weakly founded to be made argumentative; for the action is perfect, whether those words be used or forborn: And in truth, to speak my opinion, I see no great harm could ensue, were they quite omitted. Certainly thus much good would follow,

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that some part (tho' not a little one) of the superstition that adheres to that action, by reason of an ungrounded conceit of the necessity and force of the words in it, would forthwith peel off, and fall away. I would not have you understand me so, as if I would prescribe for, or desire the disuse of the words; only two things I would commend to you: 1. That the use of the canon is a thing indifferent. And, 2. That in this knack of making sacraments, christians have taken a greater liberty than they can well justify. (1.) In forging sacraments more than God (for ought doth or can appear) did ever intend. And, (2.) In adding to the sacraments, instituted of God, many formalities and ceremonial circumstances, upon no warrant but their own; which circumstances, by long use, begat in the minds of men a conceit, that they were essential parts of that, to which indeed they were but appendant; and that only by the device of some, who practised a power in the church more than was convenient.

Thus much for the first common mistake.

The second is worse than it. You see that both parts agreed in the acknowledgment of the real presence of the body of Christ in the *Eucharist*, tho' they differ in the manner of his presence, and applica-
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tion of himself to the receiver; tho' the protestant disputant seems to have gone a little beyond his leader. Had he expressed himself in the point of bread and wine, what became of it, whether it remained in its proper nature, yea or no; I could the better have fathomed him. Now these words of his, that the bread and wine, after consecration, are truly and really the body of Christ, howsoever they are supplied and allayed with that clause, *not after a carnal, but after a spiritual manner*, yet still remain too crude and raw, and betray the speaker for a *Lutheran* at least, if not for a favourer of the church of *Rome*: For as for that phrase of *a spiritual manner*, which seems to give season and moderation to his conclusion, it can yield him but small relief. For, first, to say the flesh of Christ is in the bread, but *not after a carnal manner*, is but the same nonsense which the divines of *Rome* put upon us on the like occasion; when telling us, that the blood of Christ is really sacrificed and shed in the sacrament, they add by way of gloss, that it is done *incruentè*, unbloodily. By the like analogy they may tell us, if they please, that the body of Christ is there incorporated unbodily; flesh not carnally, may pass the press jointly the next edition of the book of bulls. Again, in another

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respect, that clause of a *spiritual manner* doth your protestant disputer but little service, if any at all; for the catholick disputant contriving with himself how to seat the body of God in the *Eucharist*, as may be most for his ease, tells us, that he is there as spirits and glorified bodies (which St. *Paul* calls *spiritual*) are in the places they possess. So then, the one tells you the body of Christ is there really, but spiritually; the other, that he is there really, but as a spirit in a place. And what now, I pray you, is the difference between them? By the way, in the passage you may see what account to make of your catholick disputer. *Aristotle*, and with him common sense, tells us thus much, *that he that compares two bodies together must know them both*. Doth this gentleman know any thing concerning the site and locality of spirits, and bodies glorified? If he doth; let him do us the courtesy as to shew us, at what price he purchased that degree of knowledge, that so we may try our credit, and see if we can buy it at the same rate: *Tertius è cælo cecidit Cato*? Is he like a second *Paul*, lately descended out of the third heavens, and there hath made us the discovery? for by what other means he could attain to that knowledge, my dulness cannot suggest. But if he doth not know (as he neither doth nor can, for there is no means

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means left to make discovery that way) then with what congruity can he tell us, that the body of Christ is in the bread, as spirits and glorified bodies are in their places; if he know not what manner of location and site, spirits and glorified bodies have? I shall not need to prompt your discretion thus far, as that you ought not to make dainties of such fruitless and desperate disputers; who, as the Apostle notes, thrust themselves into things they have not seen, and upon a false shew of knowledge, abuse easy hearers; and of things they know not, adventure to speak they know not what.

To return then, and consider a little more of this second mistake common to both your disputants, I will deal as favourably as I can with your protestant disputer: For tho' I think he mistakes himself, (for I know no protestant that teacheth, that the common bread, after the word spoken, is really made the body of Christ) yet he might well take occasion thus to err out of some protestant writings; for generally the reformed divines do falsely report that holy action, whether you regard the essence, or use, thereof.

For, first, if in regard of the essence, some protestants, and that of chief note, stick not to say, that the words of consecration are not a mere *trope*; and from
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hence it must needs follow, that in some sense they must needs be taken literally; which is enough to plead authority for the gentleman's error. But that which they preach concerning a real presence and participation of Christ's body in the sacrament, they expound not by a supposal that the bread becomes God's body, but that, together with the sacramental elements, there is conveyed into the soul of the worthy receiver the very body and blood of God; but after a secret, ineffable, and wonderful manner. From hence, as I take it, have proceeded these crude speeches of the learned of the reformed parts, some dead, some living; wherein they take upon them to assure the divines of *Rome*, that we acknowledge a real presence as well as they; but for the manner how, *con*, or *trans*, or *sub*, or *in*, ἐπέχομεν, we play the *Scepticks*, and determine not. This conceit, besides the falshood of it, is a mere novelty, neither is it to be found in the books of any of the antients, till *Martin Bucer* arose. He, out of an unseasonable bashfulness and fear to seem to recede too far from the church of *Rome*, taught to the purpose now related, concerning the doctrine of Christ's presence in the sacrament; and from him it descended into the writings of *Calvin* and *Beza*, whose authority have well near spread it over the face of the reformed

reformed churches. This is an error which, as I said, touches the essence of that holy action; but there are many now which touch the end and use of it, which are practised by the reformed parts: For out of an extravagant fancy they have of it, they abuse it to many ends, of which we may think the first institutor (save that he was God, and knew all things) never thought of. For we make it an arbitrator of civil businesses, and imploy it in ending controversies; and for confirmation of what we say or do, we commonly promise to take the sacrament upon it. We teach, that it confirms our faith in Christ; whereas indeed the receiving of it is a sign of faith confirmed, and men come to it to testify that they *do* believe, not to procure that they *may* believe: For if a man doubt of the truth of christianity, think you that his scruples will be removed upon the receiving of the sacrament? I would it were so; we should not have so many doubting christians, who yet receive the sacrament oft enough. We teach it to be *viaticum morientium*, whereby we abuse many distressed consciences and sick bodies, who seek for comfort there, and finding it not, conclude from thence (I speak what I know) some defect in their faith. The participation of this sacrament to sick and weak persons, what unseemly events

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events hath it occasion'd? the vomiting up of the elements anon, upon the receipt of them; the refurging the wine into the cup, before the minister could remove his hand, to the interruption of the action. Now all these mistakes and errors have risen upon some ungrounded and fond practices, crept long since (God knows how) into the church, and as yet not sufficiently purged out. I will be bold to inform you what it is which is *πρωτον ψευδος*, the main fundamental fallacy whence all these abuses have sprung. There hath been a fancy of long subsistence in the churches, that in the communion there is something given besides bread and wine, of which *the numerality* given, men have not yet agreed. Some say it is the body of God, into which the bread is transubstantiated; some say it is the same body with which the bread is consubstantiated; some, that the bread remaining what it was, there passes with it to the soul the real body of God, in a secret unknown manner; some, that a further degree of faith is supplied us; others, that some degree of God's grace, whatever it be, is exhibited, which otherwise would be wanting: All which variety of conceits must needs fall out, as having no other ground but conjecture weakly founded. To settle you therefore in your judgment, both of
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the thing itself, and of the true use of it, I will commend to your consideration these few propositions.

1st, In the communion there is nothing given but bread and wine.

2^{dly}, The bread and wine are signs indeed, but not of any thing there exhibited, but of somewhat given long since, even of Christ given for us upon the cross sixteen hundred years ago, and more.

3^{dly}, Jesus Christ is eaten at the communion-table in no sense, neither spiritually, by virtue of any thing done there, nor really; neither metaphorically, nor literally. Indeed that which is eaten (I mean the bread) is called Christ by a metaphor; but it is eaten truly and properly.

4^{thly}, The spiritual eating of Christ is common to all places, as well as the Lord's table.

Last of all, The uses and ends of the Lord's supper can be no more than such as are mentioned in the scriptures, and they are but two.

1. The commemoration of the death and passion of the Son of God, specified by himself at the institution of the ceremony.

2. To testify our union with Christ, and communion one with another; which end *St. Paul* hath taught us.

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In these few conclusions the whole doctrine and use of the Lord's supper is fully set down; and whoso leadeth you beyond this, doth but abuse you: *Quicquid ultra queritur, non intelligitur.* The proof of these propositions would require more than the limits of a letter will admit of; and I see myself already to have exceeded these bounds, &c. &c. &c.

F I N I S.

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